Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1051/11 **Recommendation – APPROVE**

Site: **178 South Street Lancing West Sussex BN15 8AU**

Proposal: **Conversion of ground floor shop to studio flat (with new front window and re-located door)**

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a vacant shop at the southern end of South Street. It was formerly in use as Lancing Green Bakery and, according to the planning agent, it became vacant approximately 3 years ago. It has had a 'to let' sign in the window for this period but, other than short-term seasonal lets, it has not received any interest.

The application therefore seeks to change the use of the ground floor shop to a studio flat. There is an existing flat at first floor. The adjacent property is also a vacant shop premises at ground floor with flat above served by a central recessed doorway. The application site currently has its entrance door on the south side of the frontage and the proposal seeks to remove this entrance, which is recessed behind the shop window. The window and door will be replaced with a triple pane window style to match the adjacent shop flush across the frontage with the stall riser extended. A new entrance will be formed off the central recess, again matching the entrance to the adjacent shop.

Internally the studio will have its living accommodation at the front with a kitchenette and shower room at the rear. Access is also available from the rear via a side passageway which runs around the side and rear of the building. Cycle parking and refuse storage is proposed to be within this area although exact details have yet to be submitted.

The studio will have an internal floor area of 35.6sqm.

Relevant Planning History

N/A

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Transport Planning Officer has no objection. From inspection of the plans the proposal does not include any

vehicular parking facility. Using the latest WSCC parking standards a development of this size in this location would require one vehicular parking space. However given that the site is in a sustainable location in Lancing close to bus and rail links he does not consider a nil parking provision to be of detriment to highway safety. A small provision of on-street parking is available on South Street close to the site and the LPA may wish to consider the impact this development would have towards on street parking.

Cycle parking has been included in this plan, this should be secured and covered and he asks that this provision is secured via condition. Giving consideration to the previous use of the site he considers this proposal to be less intensive and as such would have no highways concerns. If the LPA are minded to approve this application a conditions securing the cycle parking provision should be included.

Adur District Council: The Environmental Health Officer has no objection subject to a condition requiring thermal double glazing and a mechanical heat recovery and ventilation system being installed. The windows need to remain closed in order to ensure internal sound levels are acceptable therefore a MHRV will ensure that thermal comfort as well as the necessary air changes required under the Building Regulations can be achieved inside the property without the need to open the windows.

Representations

Lancing Parish Council – No objection

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur District Local Plan (saved policies): AG1, AS1 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions'
PPG24 'Planning and Noise' (DoE 1994)

Planning Assessment

Principle

Policy AS1 of the Adur District Local Plan states that development which involves the loss of existing shopping provision within allocated areas (such as this) will not be permitted if the proposal is likely to detract from the character and vitality of the area.

As stated above, the premises have been vacant for 3 years with little interest shown for re-use as a shop or commercial premises. This part of South Street is likely to have its shopping function relaxed in the forthcoming Local Plan and, consequently, the principle of the loss of a shop use is considered to be acceptable.

Visual amenity

The alterations to the shop front are not considered to be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area and will introduce a more symmetrical appearance to this building.

Residential amenity

The proposed studio flat will have its living and bedroom accommodation on the ground floor and will potentially visible from the street through the large frontage window. However, this arrangement exists elsewhere and it is not considered to be a sufficient reason to resist the proposal.

The Environmental Health Officer was initially concerned at the traffic noise impact on the future occupiers of the property and required an acoustic assessment to be carried out. The result of the survey was that the site fell within noise exposure category 'C' as defined in PPG24. This states that planning permission should not normally be granted unless conditions are imposed to ensure a commensurate level of protection against noise. The report recommends that thermal glazing be installed to provide sound insulation with the windows remaining closed. A mechanical heat recovery and ventilation system should also be installed. The EHO has no objection on this basis.

The internal floor area of the flat meets the minimum standard as set out in DC Standard No.4 and it is considered that the proposal will result in an acceptable standard of residential accommodation without detriment to existing or future occupiers.

Accessibility and parking

The site lies in a sustainable location in Lancing close to bus and rail links and the Transport Planning Officer does not consider that a nil parking provision will be of detriment to highway safety. Cycle parking is proposed and the exact details can be reserved by condition.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and would help meet the need for additional housing without detracting from the existing local urban environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety, in accordance with policy AG1 of the Adur District Local Plan. While it will result in the loss of a shop use, contrary to Local Plan policy AS1, it is not considered that this will cause harm to the overall vitality or viability of the shopping function of Lancing.

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Time limit
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a scheme for protecting the proposed dwelling from road traffic noise has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works which form part of the scheme shall be completed before the permitted dwelling is occupied and shall specifically include the provision of thermal double glazing and a mechanical heat recovery and ventilation system.
3. Secure, covered cycle parking shall be provided within the curtilage of the site in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development hereby approved. Such approved cycle facilities shall be provided on the site prior to occupation of the dwelling hereby approved and shall thereafter be retained permanently solely for such purposes.
4. The dwelling shall not be occupied until the associated facilities for storing refuse and waste, including for waste that can be recycled, have been provided in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
5. Approved Plans

Is recommendation contrary to any representations? N

Case Officer signed: Peter Barnett Date: 16 February 2012

Authorised and signed by: [redacted] Date: 20/2/2012